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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1. A network termination unit, comprising:
 - a) a port operable to receive content signals;
 - b) a demodulator operable to demodulate the content signals into demodulated content signals;
 - c) a decoder operable to decode the demodulated content signals into display signals; and
 - d) a module operable to detect use patterns of a user viewing display signals on a viewing device and to transmit the use patterns as use pattern packets.
- 2. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the network termination unit further comprises a set-top box.
- 3. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the network termination unit further comprises a cable modem.
- 4. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the viewing device further comprises a television.
- The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the viewing device further comprises a computing device.
 - 6. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the use pattern packets are identified as such using a content discovery protocol.
 - 7. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the decoder is also operable to decode the demodulated content signals into command and control signals.
 - 8. The network termination unit of claim 1, wherein the module is also operable to detect services available information.
 - 9. A content analyzer, comprising:
 - a) a port operable to receive use pattern packets from a network termination unit;
- b) a decoder operable to decode the use pattern packets into data;

Seq. No. 4176 9 2705-167

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- c) a processor operable to:
 - i) analyze the data to derive viewing information; and
 - ii) characterize the network termination unit by that viewing information.
- 10. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the content analyzer resides at the distribution hub.
 - 11. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the content analyzer resides at the head end.
 - 12. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the decoder decodes the use pattern packets in accordance with a content discovery protocol.
 - 13. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the processor is also operable to monitor services available information.
 - 14. The content analyzer of claim 9, wherein the processor is operable to use the characterization of the network termination unit to target video content to that network termination unit.
 - 15. A method of transmitting use patterns, the method comprising:
 - a) tracking use patterns of a viewing device, based upon selection of content on the viewing device;
 - b) formatting data representative of the use patterns or services available information into network packets as payload data;
 - c) setting a network packet header to identify the payload as use patterns, forming a use pattern packet; and
 - d) transmitting the use pattern packet.
 - 16. The method of claim 15, wherein setting a network packet header is done in accordance with a content discovery protocol.
- 17. The method of claim 15, wherein the method further comprises tracking services available information.

Seq. No. 4176 10 2705-167

- 18. The method of claim 15, wherein the method further comprises tracking video content delivery to users.
- 19. The method of claim 18, wherein the video content further comprises programs.
- 20. The method of claim 18, wherein the video content further comprises advertising.
- 5 21. The method of claim 15, wherein the use patterns or services available information of a viewing device further comprises use patterns or services available information of service extension offered on the viewing device.
 - 22. A network termination unit, comprising:
 - a) a means for receiving video content signals;
 - b) a means for demodulating the video content signals into demodulated video content signals;
 - c) a means for decoding the demodulated video content signals into display signals;
 - d) a means for displaying the display signals; and
 - e) a means for detecting use patterns or services available information of a user viewing display signals on the viewing device and to transmit the use patterns or services available information as use pattern packets.
 - 23. The network termination unit of claim 22, wherein the network termination unit further comprises a cable set-top box.
 - 24. The network termination unit of claim 22, wherein the network termination unit further comprises a cable modem.
 - 25. The network termination unit of claim 22, wherein the means for detecting use patterns or services available information is operable to detect delivery of video content.
 - 26. A content analyzer, comprising:
 - a) a means for receiving use pattern packets from a network termination unit;
- b) a means for decoding the use pattern packets into data;

Seq. No. 4176 11 2705-167

- c) a processing means operable to:
 - i) analyze the data to derive viewing information; and
 - ii) characterize the network termination unit by that viewing information.
- 27. The content analyzer of claim 26, wherein the content analyzer resides at a distribution hub.
- 28. The content analyzer of claim 26, wherein the content analyzer resides at a head end.
- 29. The content analyzer of claim 26, wherein the processor is further operable to target the network termination unit by its characterization.
- 30. An article containing machine-readable code that, when executed, causes the machine to:
 - a) track use patterns or services available information of a viewing device, based upon selection of video content on the viewing device;
 - b) format data representative of the use patterns or services available information into network packets as payload data;
 - c) set a network packet header to identify the payload as use patterns, forming a use pattern packet; and
 - d) transmit the use pattern packet.
- 31. The article of claim 30, wherein the article contains machine-readable code that, when executed, further causes the machine to monitor status of delivery of video content.

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